

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT L 00013 01 OF 02 071240Z
ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 TRSE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01
EB-07 AID-05 MCT-01 /075 W
-----071351Z 102922 /47

R 071120Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6379
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 0013

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR PINT MPR
SUBJECT: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - JANUARY 7

SUMMARY: OFFICIAL ELECTION RETURNS SHOW THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT AND THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY FINISHED IN NEARLY A DEAD HEAT, WITH 38.7 PERCENT AND 38.1 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE RESPECTIVELY. PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM, IN REMARKS TO THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, INDICATED THAT HE BELIEVES HE CAN RULE A STABLE GOVERNMENT DESPITE HIS SLIM PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY. LABOR PARTY YOUTH ARE DISCONTENTED ABOUT THE COALITION WITH THE PMSD, WHICH THEY BELIEVE WILL COST THEIR PARTY VOTES IN THE NEXT ELECTORAL ROUND. THE MMM PROMISES (OR THREATENS) TO "INTENSIFY THE STRUGGLE" IN THE TRADE UNION FIELD, WHICH MAY MEAN A PERIOD OF LABOR STRIFE. RAM PYNDIAH, ENFANT TERRIBLE OF THE MMM, WAS ARRESTED AND DETAINED FOR FIVE DAYS IN CONNECTION WITH AN (ALLEGED) ATTEMPTED FIRE-BOMBING OF THE POLICE COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW. PMSD LEADER GAETAN DUVAL MAY RESIGN AS PARTY LEADER. END SUMMARY.

1. PUBLICATION OF THE OFFICIAL ELECTION RETURNS HAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PORT L 00013 01 OF 02 071240Z

PERMITTED AN ACCURATE DETERMINATION OF THE PERCENTAGE OF THE POPULAR VOTE RECEIVED BY THE MAJOR PARTIES. A NEAR DEAD-HEAT BETWEEN THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT (MMM) WAS THE ACTUAL RESULT, SOMEWHAT LESS OF A VICTORY BY THE MMM THAN WAS EARLIER REPORTED:

PARTY	PERCENT POPULAR VOTE	PERCENT ASSEMBLY SEATS
-------	----------------------	------------------------

MMM	38.7 PERCENT	48.6 PERCENT
IP	38.1 PERCENT	40.0 PERCENT
PMSD	16.5 PERCENT	11.4 PERCENT
OTHERS	6.7 PERCENT	0

THESE RESULTS CONFIRM THAT THE PECULIARITIES OF THE MAURITIAN ELECTORAL SYSTEM CAN GIVE A MAJORITY OF THE SEATS TO A PARTY WINNING LESS THAN 40 PERCENT OF THE POPULAR VOTE.

2. L'EXPRESS REPORTS THAT THE LABOR GOVERNMENT IS STUDYING THE QUESTION OF REVISING THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM, AS THE PRESENT ONE DOES NOT FAVOR THE LABOR PARTY. U.S., UK AND SWEDISH INSTITUTES ARE REPORTEDLY MAKING SPECIAL STUDIES FOR THE GOVERNMENT. A TWO-THIRDS MAJORITY OF THE ASSEMBLY MUST APPROVE A CHANGE, SO IT SEEMS UNLIKELY THE GOVERNMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE A CHANGE THAT WOULD FAVOR IT AND DISFAVOR THE MMM.

3. IN HIS NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS TO THE NATION, PRIME MINISTER RAMGOOLAM ADMITTED THAT THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS OWN POLITICAL PARTY IN THE ELECTIONS HAD BEEN "DISAPPOINTING," AND HE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT THE EMERGENCY OF "CERTAIN FISSIPAROUS TENDENCIES." STILL, HE SAID, THE MAJORITY OF THE ELECTORATE HAD VOTED AGAINST RADICAL AND ABRUPT CHANGE. HE PROCEEDED TO PROMISE A "RADICAL PROGRAM" WITH EMPHASIS ON SOCIALIST GOALS TO BE REALIZED THROUGH THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS. (THE MMM HAS COMPLAINED THAT HE HAS STOLEN THEIR PROGRAM, WHICH IN PART IS QUITE TRUE AND DOUBTLESS DELIBERATE, FOR EXAMPLE, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PORT L 00013 01 OF 02 071240Z

FREE SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION.) AT THE SAME TIME RAMGOOLAM REASSURED LOCAL AND FOREIGN INVESTORS, WHO HAD BEEN DISCOURAGED BY THE ELECTORAL OUTCOME, THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO CREATE A FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR THEM.

4. IN HIS REMARKS TO MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS WHO CALLED ON HIM IN KEEPING WITH TRADITION ON JANUARY 1, RAMGOOLAM SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO A PERIOD OF PEACE AND STABILITY IN MAURITIUS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED GENERAL UNCERTAINTY AND PERHAPS A BRIEF HIATUS IN GOVERNMENT ACTIVITY OWING TO THE ELECTIONS AND THEIR AFTERMATH, BUT HE REFERRED TO THE SLIM MAJORITIES OF SEVERAL RULING PARTIES/COALITIONS IN WESTERN EUROPE. HE SAID WE HAVE "GOT USED TO" THAT SITUATION AND THERE WAS NO REASON TO WORRY THAT THE GOVERNMENT HERE WOULD NOT MANAGE IN SUCH A SITUATION. THE TENOR OF HIS REMARKS INDICATED THAT HE INTENDS TO REMAIN IN OFFICE FOR SOME TIME, PROBABLY WITHOUT NEW ELECTIONS. THAT IS, IF HE IS PERMITTED TO.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PORT L 00013 02 OF 02 071327Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 TRSE-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

EB-07 AID-05 MCT-01 /075 W

-----071350Z 103318 /47

R 071120Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6380

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PORT LOUIS 0013

5. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY IMPLEMENTED ITS PROGRAM OF FREE SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION PROMISED DURING THE CAMPAIGN. A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF TURMOIL HAS RESULTED, SINCE ALL PARENTS HAVE IMMEDIATELY STOPPED PAYING THEIR SCHOOL FEES, BUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROMISE IS BEING WELL RECEIVED.

6. SEVERAL PAPERS COMMENT ON DISCONTENT AMONG THE YOUTH OF THE LABOR PARTY. SOME OF THE YOUNGER SUCCESSFUL LABOR CANDIDATES ARE ANGRY THAT THEY DID NOT RECEIVE THE MINISTRIES TO WHICH THEY FELT ENTITLED AND THEY ARE ALSO DISPLEASED OVER NOT HAVING BEEN CONSULTED ABOUT THE COALITION WITH THE PMSD, WHICH THEY OPPOSE. THEY ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO NEW ELECTIONS AND ARE CONCERNED THAT THE COALITION WILL COST LABOR VOTES. THEY SAY THE OLD-TIMERS WERE REJECTED BY THE VOTERS SO THE PARTY LEADERSHIP OUGHT TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE VIEWS OF THE PARTY YOUTH.

7. ABDOOL RAZACK PEEROO, THE ONLY SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE OF THE LABOR PARTY'S ELECTION COALITION PARTNER, THE MUSLIM COMMITTEE OF ACTION (CAM), WAS RUMORED TO BE CONSIDERING QUITTING THE GOVERNMENT SIDE IN ANGER OVER HAVING BEEN PASSED OVER FOR A MINISTRY. (YOUSOUF MOHAMED, A CAM
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PORT L 00013 02 OF 02 071327Z

"BEST LOSER" DEPUTY, DID RECEIVE A MINISTRY.) PEEROO

LATER TOLD THE PRESS HE HAD DECIDED TO STICK WITH LABOR, IN FACT HE PLANS TO JOIN THE PARTY, AS HE SAYS THE CAM IS DEAD. HE MADE A PLEA IN FAVOR OF THE ABANDONMENT OF COMMUNALISM. HAD HE DEFECTED TO THE MMM HE COULD HAVE BROUGHT DOWN THE GOVERNMENT.

8. THE MMM HAS CONTINUED ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LABOR-PMSD COALITION AND HAS PROMISED TO "INTENSIFY THE STRUGGLE" IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT, WHICH MAY MEAN THE COUNTRY WILL FACE A PERIOD OF STRIKES AND OTHER FORMS OF LABOR STRIFE. THE MMM PLANS TO OFFER COUNTER-PROPOSALS TO THE GOVERNMENT'S SPEECH FROM THE THRONE WHEN THE ASSEMBLY MEETS MARCH 1, INCLUDING NATIONALIZATION OF THE DOCKS AND STEVEDORE COMPANIES.

9. PRIME MINISTER RENE OF THE SEYCHELLES SENT A CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO THE MMM ON ITS ELECTORAL VICTORY. HE WAS THE ONLY FOREIGN LEADER TO DO SO, SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE.

10. RAM PYNDIAH, DEFEATED MMM CANDIDATE, WAS ARRESTED ON DECEMBER 31 AND HELD IN DETENTION FOR FIVE DAYS BEFORE BEING RELEASED. THE POLICE, WHO ARE CONTINUING AN INVESTIGATION, WERE CLOSE-MOUTHED ABOUT THE BASIS FOR THE ARREST, BUT ONE PAPER REPORTS THAT A CAR BELONGING TO PYNDIAH WAS FOUND BY THE POLICE NEAR POLICE COMMISSIONER FULENA'S BEACH BUNGALOW AND IT CONTAINED MOLOTOV COCKTAILS. (HOUSES BELONGING TO FOREIGN MINISTER WALTER AND FINANCE MINISTER RINGADOO HAVE BEEN FIRE-BOMBED SINCE THE ELECTIONS.) THE POLICE HAVE ALSO ARRESTED SOME MEMBERS OF A GANG OF THUGS -- IDENTIFIED AS MMM SUPPORTERS BY SEVERAL PAPERS-- WHO TERRORIZED SEVERAL DANCE-HALLS AND RESTAURANTS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE.

11. PMSD LEADER GAETAN DUVAL HAS CALLED A PARTY MEETING
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PORT L 00013 02 OF 02 071327Z

FOR JANUARY 9 IN CUREPIPE AT WHICH HE PROMISES TO GIVE AN ACCOUNTING TO HIS FOLLOWERS. NEWSPAPER ADS ANNOUNCING THE RALLY CONTAIN THE NOTICE THAT DUVAL WILL RESIGN AND A NEW LEADER WILL BE ELECTED, BUT HIS OPPONENTS SAY THIS IS JUST A PLOY HE HAS OFTEN USED IN THE PAST.

12. SATCAM BOOLELL, MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND PROMINENT LABOR PARTY FIGURE, WAS KNIGHTED BY QUEEN ELIZABETH ON HER NEW YEAR'S HONORS LIST. SIR SATCAM HAS NOW ACHIEVED MEDIEVAL STATUS EQUAL TO THAT OF HIS CABINET COLLEAGUES SIR SEEWOOSAGUR, SIR VERRASAMY AND SIR HAROLD, AND EIGHT OTHER MAURITIANS. BOOLELL MAY BE THE LAST BLOSSOM OF MAURITIAN

KNIGHTHOOD, AS BOTH THE LABOR PARTY AND THE MMM HAVE DECLARED
IN FAVOR OF A MAURITIAN REPUBLIC. TWTWTW.
KEELEY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ELECTION RESULTS, LABOR RELATIONS, POLITICAL SUMMARIES, POLITICAL PARTIES, CEREMONIAL MESSAGES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 07-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977PORTL00013
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770007-0036
Format: TEL
From: PORT LOUIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770171/aaaackfo.tel
Line Count: 227
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fd9030dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3644320
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MAURITIUS WEEKLY REVIEW - JANUARY 7 SUMMARY: OFFICIAL ELECTION RETURNS SHOW THE MAURITIAN MILITANT MOVEMENT AND THE INDEPENDENCE PARTY FINIS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SOPN, MP, (RAMGOOLAM, SEEWOOSAGUR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fd9030dc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009